

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2006 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 766

(Senator Colburn)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Environmental Matters

Hunting - Exemptions from License and Stamp Requirement

This bill modifies the provisions that exempt specified relatives of owners and tenants of farmland from the requirement to obtain a hunting license to hunt on the farmland. The bill establishes a definition for “child,” which expands the existing exemption for “children” to include foster child, stepchild, grandchild, foster grandchild, and stepgrandchild. In order to qualify for the exemption, however, a child must be eligible to purchase a junior resident or junior nonresident hunting license; thus, adult children would no longer be exempt. The bill also repeals the exemption for children’s spouses.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Although special fund revenues from license and stamp fees could be affected due to the bill’s changes, the net effect is not anticipated to be significant. Federal funds could be affected to the extent the bill results in a change in the number of licensed hunters in the State. Expenditures would not be materially affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The bill also clarifies that the individuals exempt under the bill would be exempt from obtaining a bow and arrow stamp and black powder (muzzleloader) stamp; this merely codifies current practice.

Current Law: With respect to hunting on farmland only, the following individuals are not required to obtain a hunter's license or bonus antlered deer stamp: (1) the resident owner of the farmland and the owner's spouse, children, and children's spouse; (2) a tenant and the tenant's spouse, children, and, if residing on the farmland, children's spouse; (3) a nonresident owner of a parcel of farmland and the owner's spouse, children, and children's spouse under specified conditions; (4) any resident serving in the armed forces, under specified conditions; and (5) any unarmed person participating in an organized foxhunt. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) advises that it also exempts these individuals from the requirement to obtain bow and muzzleloader stamps.

License fees are as follows: (1) for a resident younger than 16, \$10.50; (2) for a resident between 16 and 64 years, \$24.50; (3) for a resident 65 years or older, \$5.00; (4) for a nonresident younger than 16, \$65.00; (5) for a nonresident 16 years or older, \$130.00; and (6) for a nonresident three-day hunting license, \$45.00. Bow and muzzleloader stamp fees are \$6 per stamp for a resident and \$25 per stamp for a nonresident. All fees are paid into the Wildlife Management and Protection Fund.

Background: In fiscal 2005, DNR issued approximately 121,000 hunting licenses and collected approximately \$6 million in associated fees. DNR also receives federal funds under the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act that is based in part on the number of licensed hunters in the State.

State Revenues: According to DNR, the number of people currently exempt from obtaining a license to hunt on farmland totals approximately 10,000. By modifying the provisions regarding the exemptions, the bill could result in an increase or decrease in the total number exempted. Accordingly, special fund revenues from license and stamp fees could be affected. DNR advises, however, that it believes the net impact on special fund revenues would likely not be significant; any loss in revenues due to the additional exemptions for grandchildren would likely be offset by an increase in revenues due to the repeal of the exemption for adult children and children's spouses.

The number of licensed hunters drives federal funding provided to DNR; generally, DNR receives \$5 for each licensed hunter in the State. Accordingly, to the extent the bill results in a change in the number of licensed hunters in the State, federal funds could be affected.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: Legislation exempting specified relatives from the requirement to obtain a hunting license was introduced as HB 398 of 2000 and HB 1043 of 2001. Both bills received unfavorable reports from the House Environmental Matters Committee.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources, Department of Legislative Services

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